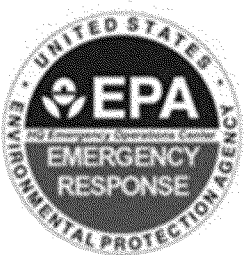


To: Eoc, Epahq[Eoc.Epahq@epa.gov]
From: Eoc, Epahq
Sent: Wed 4/1/2015 7:17:57 PM
Subject: EOC Spot Report: Update 5, Region 2, Methyl Bromide Chemical Exposure, Cruz Bay, St. John, USVI

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EOC Spot Report: Update 5, Region 2, Methyl Bromide Chemical Exposure, Cruz Bay, St. John, USVI

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report as of: 1500 EDT, 4/1/2015

Overview: On 3/20, R2 was notified of a potential chemical substance exposure that occurred in St. John, US Virgin Islands (USVI). On 3/20, a family of four was staying at Sirenusa Condominium Resort in Cruz Bay, St. John when they started showing neurological symptoms of chemical exposure. The family's symptoms worsened and they required medical care at St. Thomas Hospital and all four family members were hospitalized. On 3/24, the family members were transferred to stateside hospitals for further treatment.

Conversations held by the USVI Department of Planning and Resources (DPNR) with Terminex Pest Control (the Potentially Responsible Party) confirmed that methyl bromide pesticide was applied at a condo unit on 3/18. Methyl bromide was applied in a lower condo unit and the pesticide fumes moved upwards into the unit above that was occupied by the affected family. Methyl bromide pesticide has been prohibited for residential use by EPA since 2005 although some exemptions for agricultural use are allowed until pre-existing supplies are exhausted.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions: USVI DPNR and DOH, CDC/ATSDR, St. John Fire Department, St. John Police Department, Terminex Pest Control and condo complex management representatives are coordinating on this incident.

EPA Actions: A R2 OSC deployed to St. John on 3/21 to assist USVI DPNR in the investigation of the incident and inspected the condominium on 3/23. On 3/24, EPA conducted initial indoor and outdoor air sampling and monitoring of the unit where the family was staying. A second R2 OSC arrived on scene and both OSCs coordinated with DPNR, VI Fire Department, VI Police Department and condo management to begin development of a sampling strategy. On 3/25, responders received sampling equipment and further developed a plan for conducting air sampling, air monitoring, and the collection of wipe samples. R2 OSCs also conducted interviews with Terminex Pest Control personnel to gain information on any additional locations where methyl bromide may have been utilized.

On 3/27, crews conducted sampling in the lower condo unit that was fumigated on 3/18 (directly below the unit where the affected family stayed). The sampling included: real-time air monitoring; air samples within the condo unit for VOCs including methyl bromide; 12-hour air samples for pesticides and methyl bromide; wipe samples for pesticides and methyl bromide; and, tap water samples for VOCs and methyl bromide. On 3/28, crews completed all remaining sampling of the lower condo unit including the collection of air and tap water samples for VOC and methyl bromide. The samples shipped on 3/30 for analysis.

On 3/31, both condos were ventilated for approximately five hours and air monitor readings went down to background levels in around 30 minutes. Total VOCs directly outside openings to the units were all at background levels. The condos will be ventilated again on 4/1 and total VOCs will be monitored to determine effectiveness of measures taken thus far. A flyer was prepared and distributed on 3/31 that provides information about the building ventilation activities for residents and guests of the condominium. ATSDR will be providing USVI DOH with direct assistance in determining clearance values for the re-occupancy of the condos.

The R2 Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC) continues to work with R2's Office of Regional Counsel and the Pesticides and Toxic Substances Branch to evaluate options for management of existing stocks of methyl bromide in the US Virgin Islands. Under consideration are the mechanisms for determining where the pesticide is currently stored and how it has been utilized and/or stored in the past. Existing stocks have been identified at facilities on the islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix consisting of one cylinder at each of two facilities. Staging locations for these cylinders and options for shipment to proper disposal facilities or to the original suppliers are being evaluated. ATSDR will provide a team to investigate other potential exposures to methyl bromide in the USVI.

Personnel on-site as of 4/1 include 2 R2 OSCs and 1 RST contractor. Region 2 obtained technical assistance from HQ OCSPP/Office of Pesticide Programs.

R2 REOC remains the point of contact for all of EPA's activities related to this incident.

Media Interest: Low

The HQ EOC will continue to monitor and provided updates as needed.

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